



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rural water, wastewater programs get \$1.6 million boost

Grants will fund 13 remote maintenance workers in seven regional programs

July 26, 2006— The Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Remote Maintenance Worker (RMW) program has awarded \$1.63 million to the Aleutian & Pribilof Islands Association, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation, Maniilaq Association, Norton Sound Health Corporation, Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium, Tanana Chiefs Conference, and Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation to help provide safe drinking water and hygienic wastewater disposal for rural Alaskans.

The remote maintenance workers help protect public health by ensuring that rural Alaskans have a consistent supply of safe drinking water and sanitary wastewater disposal services. They provide training and over-the-shoulder assistance to village water and sewerage system operators. The RMWs also maintain an equipment inventory and respond to water and wastewater utility emergencies as necessary.

“Alaska’s climate is tough on water and wastewater systems. We work side by side with local operators to solve problems. The RMWs are a critical link between DEC and the community,” said DEC’s Division of Water Director Lynn Kent.

The RMW program began in 1983 with one remote maintenance worker serving 10 communities. The program now provides operations and maintenance support services to more than 180 remote communities throughout the state.

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